



## Opportunity to Participate in Test to Stay Program



[Date]

Dear students and their parents, caregivers, and guardians,

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) has been working closely with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to **implement a Test to Stay strategy** in our local school divisions. Test to Stay (TTS) is a practice that allows close contacts of individuals with COVID-19 to remain in the classroom instead of quarantining at home. It requires close contacts to take a COVID-19 test every morning for 5 days after the exposure. If the test is negative, they are allowed to stay in school. They must also wear a mask and remain without symptoms for 10 days after the exposure. Test kits are provided free of charge.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that schools consider using Test to Stay to reduce the impact of quarantine and limit school absences. Test to Stay will be open to unvaccinated or not yet fully vaccinated students. Teachers, staff, parents, and fully vaccinated students are not eligible to participate at this time. Participating students may benefit from COVID-19 testing and early identification of COVID-19, and will benefit from being able to continue to attend in-person school and certain school-based extracurricular activities.

Test to Stay is an extra layer of prevention combined with vaccination and other mitigation strategies at our school such as **(INSERT OTHER MITIGATION PRACTICES)** and can help keep students, teachers, and staff healthy and in school.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the program, called Test to Stay, and ask your permission to enroll your student. **All testing will be voluntary and only students with a signed consent form on file will be tested.** To allow your student to participate, please complete the attached consent form and return it to **[POC]** by **[Date]**.

We are extremely grateful to our committed staff and families that continue to show great flexibility and resilience as we navigate through this school year. We are excited to add Test to Stay as another mitigation strategy for our school community as we continue to work together to keep students and staff safe and in school. **I encourage you to please consider allowing your student to participate in the program, as it is an important tool available to us to keep our school community healthy and our schools open.**